



*Florida Department of  
Environmental Protection*

# *Relocation of Commercial Anchorage Areas Along the Florida Reef Tract*

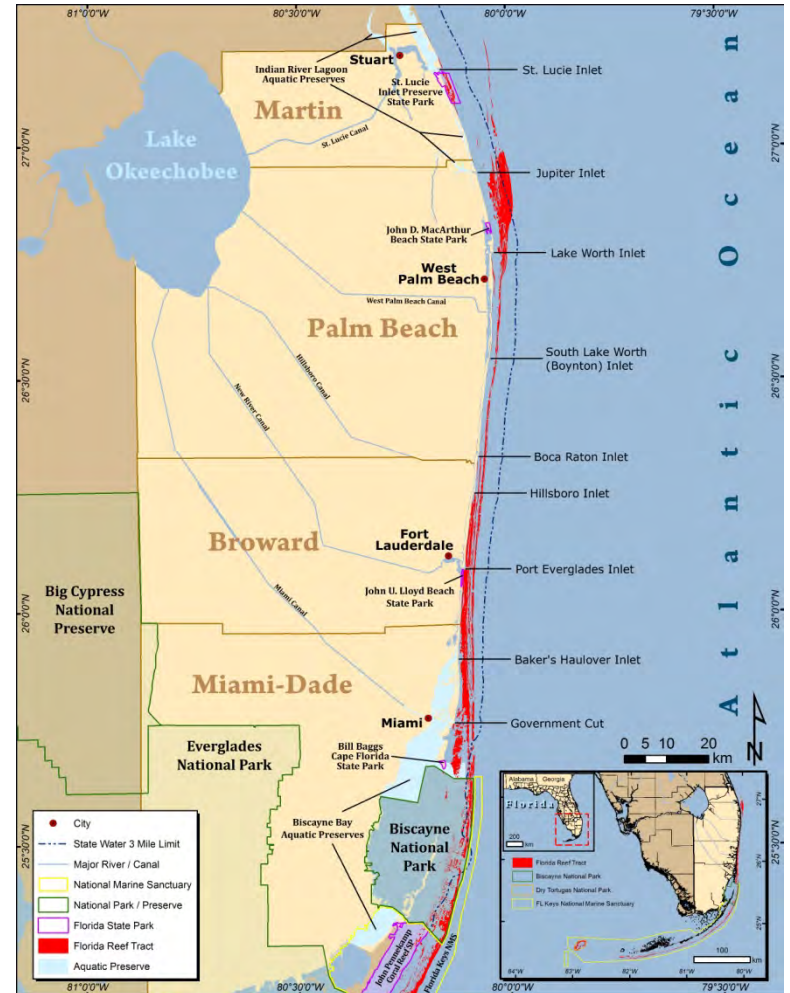
*26<sup>th</sup> U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL ▪ October 21, 2011*

*Chantal Collier, Manager  
Coral Reef Conservation Program  
Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas*



# The Florida Reef Tract

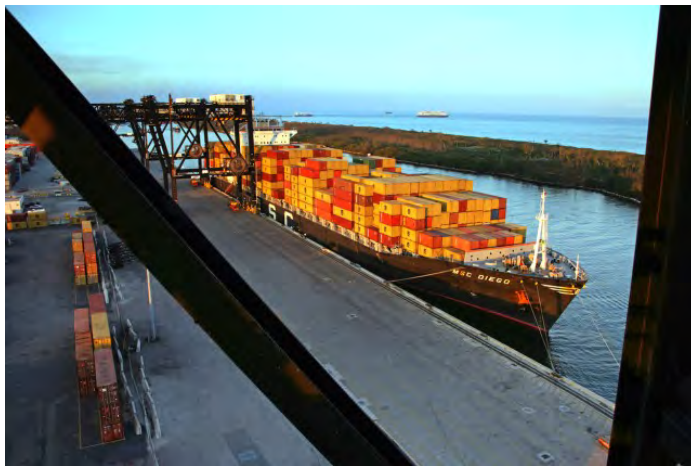
- Northern third of the Florida Reef Tract spans 170 km directly adjacent to the highly developed, mainland southeast Florida coast
- Reefs in this region are under extraordinary pressure from recreational and commercial use, coastal construction, and maritime industries.





## *Southeast Florida Seaports*

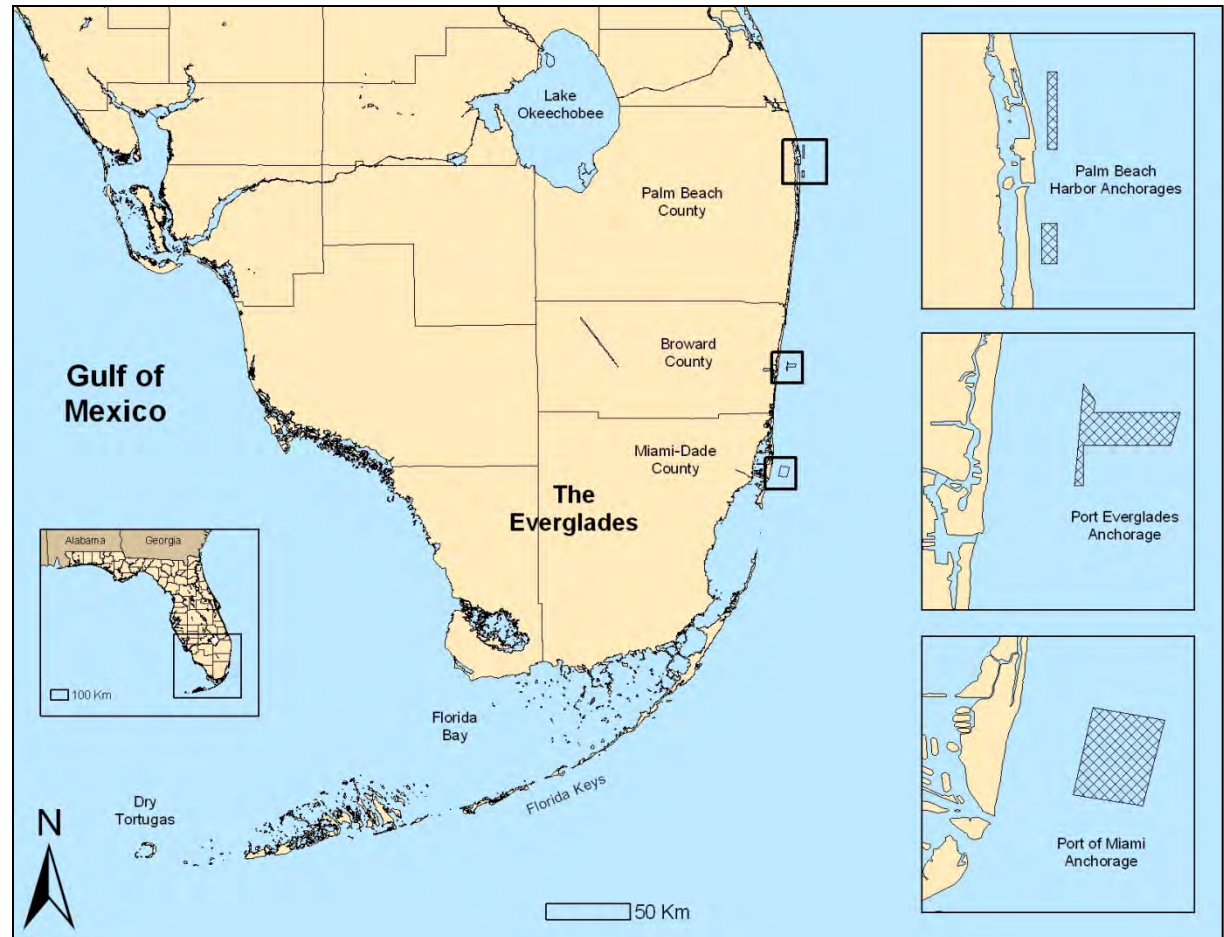
- Port of Palm Beach →
- Port Everglades ↓
- Port of Miami ↘





# *Southeast Florida Commercial Anchorages*

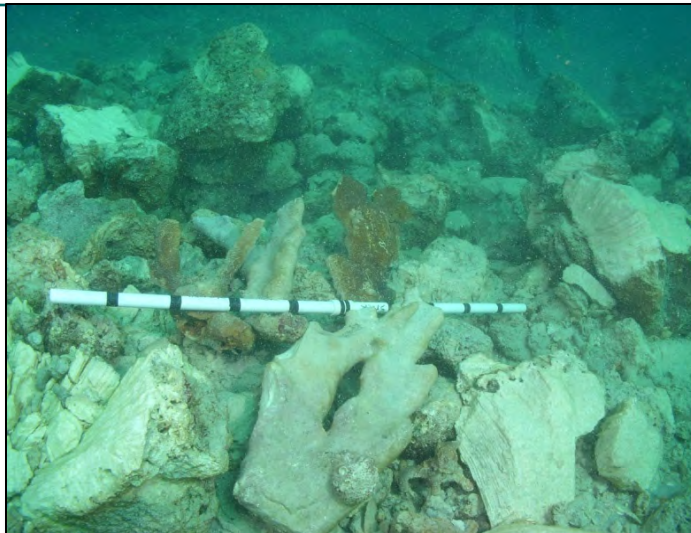
- Port of Palm Beach
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# *Southeast Florida Vessel Impacts*

**Goal =  
Avoid...**



**Which  
lead to...**



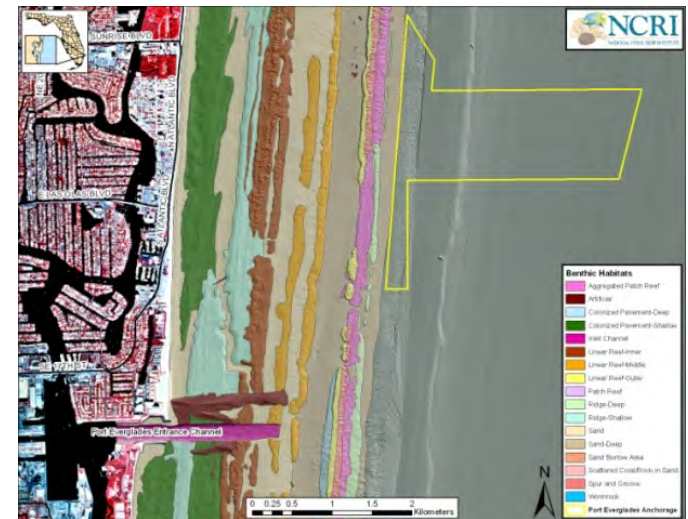
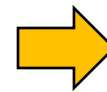
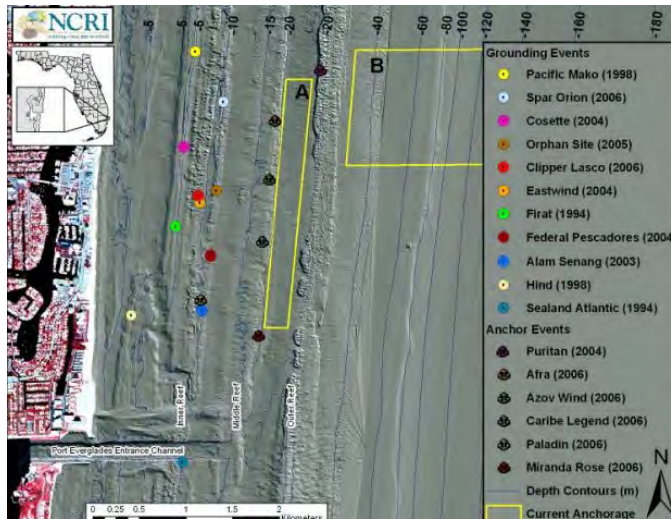




# Port Everglades Anchorage Modifications

February 5, 2008 - USCG published the final rule amending the Port Everglades anchorage area and regulations:

1. eliminating the section of the anchorage (A) closest to sensitive living coral reefs,
2. expanding the anchorage (B) in deeper waters further offshore of the reefs, and
3. limiting the time a vessel may remain in the anchorage to 72 hours.





## *Local Action Strategy (LAS)*

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***LAS: A Study to Minimize or Eliminate Hardbottom and Reef Impacts from Anchoring Activities in Designated Anchorages at the Ports of Miami and Palm Beach***

A spatial analysis of the large vessel anchorages at the ports of Palm Beach and Miami to:

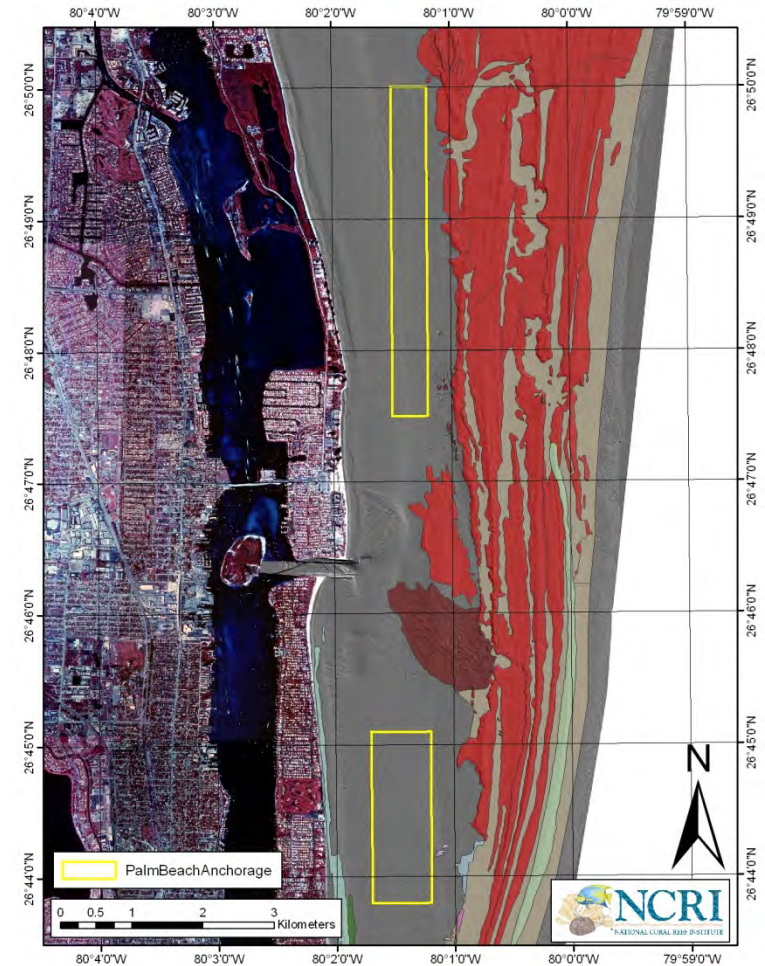
- Minimize or eliminate large vessel impacts to coral reef habitats
- Create safer large vessel anchorage configurations





## *Port of Palm Beach Commercial Anchorages*

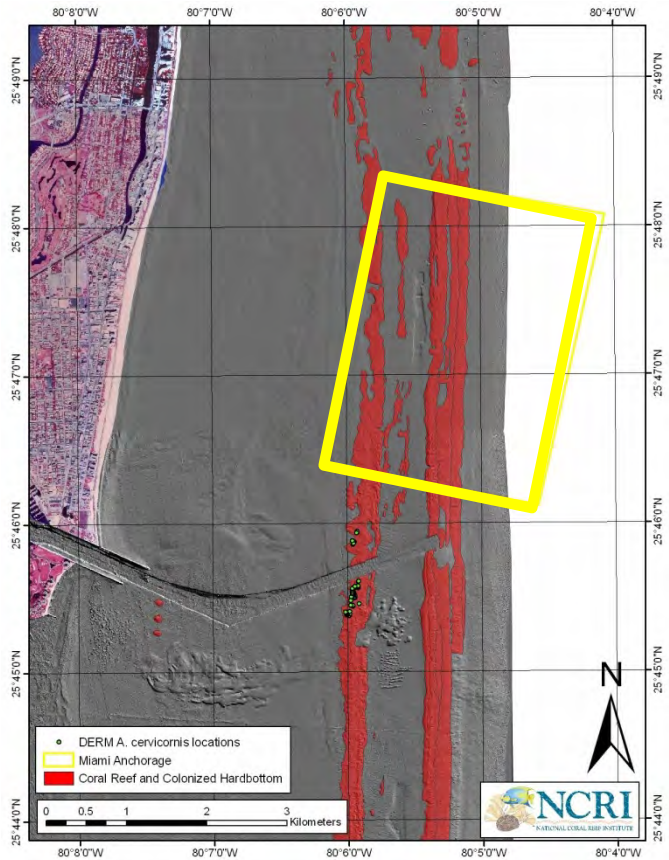
- Current designs are already avoiding all direct resource impacts.
- Only minor modifications needed to increase buffer areas between anchorage and hardbottom boundaries.







# Port of Miami Commercial Anchorage



- 28% of the Miami anchorage contains coral reef habitat (approx. 2.8 km<sup>2</sup> or 700 acres)
- Reef is located in the heavily used shallow portion of the anchorage
- Designated as critical habitat for two threatened species of corals, *Acropora cervicornis* and *A. palmata*
- Violates the intent of the 2009 Florida Coral Reef Protection Act
- Currently impedes vessel traffic in outer shipping channel. Proposed channel expansion flare will increase use conflict





# *Road to Reconfiguration - Port of Miami*

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- LAS Study Report
  - Provided spatial alternatives and recommendations to avoid all coral reef resources, however...
  - Quantity of submerged cables, permitted artificial reef sites & fish havens, coral reef habitats, and seagrasses in the area leaves very little available space for a large-vessel anchorage reconfiguration, especially in shallow water.
- In association with the LAS Project Team, the Port of Miami Harbor Safety Committee, convened an Anchorage Working Group of stakeholder representatives in 2008.
  - Using LAS study recommendations as a starting point for further discussion and planning.
  - Identifying data needs, local perspectives, and potential concerns throughout the process.
  - Committed to working together until process is complete.







## *Port of Miami Anchorage Working Group*

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- **USCG**
  - Sector Miami
  - District 7 Legal
  - Civil Engineering Unit
- **Florida DEP**
  - Coral Reef Conservation Program
  - Regulatory Division
- **NOAA**
  - Fisheries Service – Southeast Region - Habitat Conservation & Protected Species Divisions
  - Office of Coast Survey
- **Biscayne Bay Pilots Association**
- **Miami River Marine Group**
- **FWC**
  - Division of Habitat and Species Conservation
  - Law Enforcement
- **Miami-Dade County**
- **NSUOC/National Coral Reef Institute**
- **Port of Miami**
- **USACE**
  - Miami Regulatory Office
  - Civil Works – Jacksonville District
- **Fisher Island Ferry Association**

